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HARVARD PROFESSOR UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR CIA GRANT

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — A Harvard professor who said he took \$50,000 from the Central Intelligence Agency to organize a secret campus conference on Islamic fundamentalism is under investigation by university authorities.

Nadav Safran, director of Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, said he sought and obtained CIA money for the conference, scheduled next week.

A. Michael Spence, dean of the Harvard faculty of arts and sciences, said Wednesday he is investigating the matter.

Questions regarding the sponsorship of a conference at the center have come to my attention and are a matter of serious concern," he said Thursday in a prepared statement.

The Boston Globe reported today that a copy it obtained of a 1982 contract with the CIA revealed that the Egyptian-born Safran also received \$107,430 from the agency to finance the research and writing of his book, "Saudi Arabia, The Ceaseless Quest for Security," published in September by Harvard University Press.

The Harvard Crimson, a student newspaper, reported that none of almost a dozen panelists reached Wednesday knew of CIA financial support for the conference.

Harvard rules require professors to report all outside grants to their faculty superiors and pay Harvard two-thirds of the money to cover such overhead costs as researcher salaries. Faculty guidelines also prohibit secret or classified research on campus.

Safran told the Crimson he did not turn over any of the grant to the university.

He said he kept the money because he arranged the conference on his own rather than on behalf of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, even though invitations went out on Harvard stationery, the student newspaper said.

"I did not do it through the center because of the 60 percent ... and all the red tape," Safran said. "I don't think it is a serious concern." I'm not blind to the fact that some people think the CIA is a leper."

He said the money would be used to feed and house the 90 scholars expected to attend the conference.

Safran declined Thursday to discuss the matter further until the university had finished its inquiry.

The Globe said Safran, in an interview Tuesday, declined to identify the conference participants and agenda and said he planned to bar reporters from the conference to permit "free and open academic exchange."

"It is closed to the press because we have guests from overseas, Moslem and Arab ... and we want to have uninhibited discussion," he said.

Harvard professors receive millions of dollars in grant money each year from many government agencies, including the CIA.

CIA spokeswoman Patti Volz declined to confirm any agreement but said all college and university contracts are cleared with the institutions.

An official in the Harvard Office of Sponsored Research said she had no record of a contract for the conference.

"The proper posture for us would be to defer comment on the matter to Safran and to Harvard," George Lauder, chief CIA spokesman, told The Boston Globe.